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manufacture, allows airflow, and can be handled by persons of almost any age.

A preferred embodiment of the laundry roll hamper is illustrated in FIG. 1 (upright position) and FIG. 2 (expanded position). The laundry roll hamper is composed of a fabric or woven nylon bag or covering 10 and an internal frame made of plastic or other flexible, lightweight material. Bag or covering 10 encloses the entire frame and folds over a circular top frame 14 creating an opening and is secured by Velcro. A top cover 12 of plastic or other lightweight material or fabric similar to bag or covering 10 serves as the top closure. Top cover 12 is attached to top frame 14 by a cover hinge 16 creating a flap for opening and closing. Velcro secures top cover 12 when the top is closed and secured. Top frame 14 is joined to six or more vertical leg members 18 by frame hinges 20, which allow leg members 18 to be repeatedly bent outwards and straightened without fracturing. Frame hinges 20 are of the type that only allow leg members 18 to bend outwards but not inwards when straightened. Each of leg members 18, in turn, have at least two leg hinges 22 that are equidistant to frame hinges 20 at the top, to each other, and to frame hinges 20 at the bottom. Leg hinges 22 are the pivot points that allow the top third and the bottom third of leg members 18 to bend outward at 45-degree angles while the middle third remains in a vertical orientation. Leg hinges 22 are of the type that causes leg members 18 to snap and lock in place at or close to the vertical (90-degree) and at the bent (45-degree) positions. Leg hinges 22 will not allow leg members 18 to bend inwards beyond the vertical when straightened. Bag or covering 10 secures the middle portion of leg members 18 by Velcro or other fastening means in order to maintain each of leg members 18 positions and distance to one another. The bottom of leg members 18 are joined to a circular base frame 24 by frame hinges 20. Base frame 24 is made of the same material as top frame 14 and leg members 18. Base frame 24 has the same diameter as top frame 14 and is wide enough to allow the entire structure to stand upright when the hamper is empty and remain stable when the hamper is full and expanded. Bag or covering 10 also encloses the base. The laundry roll hamper can be made of various sizes, colors, designs, and combinations of fabric and material to fit ones needs and desires.

The empty laundry roll hamper is upright as shown in FIG. 1. Soiled clothes are deposited by opening the top cover 12 and dropping the clothes through the opening at top frame 14. The hamper maintains its shape and position as it is filled with clothes. When the hamper is full, or even partially full, downward pressure is exerted on top frame 14, or outward pressure to leg hinges 22 at each of leg members 18, which then bend outwards at the pivot points at frame hinges 20 and leg hinges 22 causing the hamper to expand and resemble a hexagon or polygon-shaped ball, as shown in FIG. 2. Leg members 18 are locked in the bent position. Base frame 24 keeps the expanded hamper stable until it is ready to be moved. Top cover 12 is then secured to top frame 14 by Velcro to prevent the clothes from falling off when the hamper is finally rolled. Pushing with either the hands or the feet, whichever is preferred, allows the expanded laundry hamper to roll with minimal effort. The hexagon or polygon shape provides some degree of control over flat surfaces and, if need be, can be controlled down the stairs with the hand. Otherwise, the laundry roll hamper can simply be allowed to roll down the stairs. The lightweight material used for the frame and covering should not cause any damage to stair railings, walls, or floors that it may come in contact with as it rolls down. The entire frame of the laundry roll hamper

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remains flexible and pliant yet maintains its shape as it is rolled from the upstairs bathroom, through the passageway, down the stairs, through the living room, kitchen, or family room, to the laundry room on the first floor or further down the basement. In the laundry room, top cover 12 is then unfastened and opened to remove the clothes. After the clothes are removed, leg members 18 can then be straightened by pulling up on top frame 14 while holding down base frame 24 with the feet. Or, by manually applying simultaneous inward pressure to opposite leg hinges 22 to unlock and bring the laundry roll hamper back to the upright position where the leg members again lock in place.

Thus the reader will see that our invention of the laundry roll hamper provides a very unique, practical, lightweight, yet economical container that eliminates the risk, challenge, and the difficulty of transporting soiled clothes from the upstairs bathroom, down the stairs, to the laundry room on the first floor or down the basement. The laundry roll hamper can simply be expanded and rolled like a ball with minimal effort. Furthermore, the laundry roll hamper has the additional advantages in that:

- it permits persons of almost any age to handle and roll the hamper;

- it aids the elderly in living more independently;

- it allows children to be able to help with the laundry and have fun in the process;

- it gives people with back problems the comfort knowing that they will not have to lift and carry the hamper and aggravate their already delicate condition;

- it eliminates the need for laundry bags and baskets for transporting soiled clothes.

While the above description contains many specifications, these should not be construed as limitations of the scope of the invention, but rather as an exemplification of one preferred embodiment thereof. Many other variations are possible. For example, the bag or covering and top cover can be of various material, fabrics, color, designs, prints, etc.; the top cover can be secured by Velcro, zipper, or other means. The entire frame can be made of plastic or other lightweight, pliant material, or combination thereof, and vary in size and shape. The hamper itself can be made of various sizes to fit ones needs and desires.

Thus the scope of our invention should be determined by the appended claims and their legal equivalents, rather than by the examples given.

What we claim as our invention is:

1. A partially collapsible hamper having a cylindrical upright state and a polygon expanded state, comprising a top and a bottom circular frame, a plurality of pivoting vertical leg members extending between the top and bottom circular frames, a body of flexible sheet material extending from the top circular frame down to and enclosing the vertical legs and bottom circular frame, said vertical leg members are connected to the top and bottom circular frames by hinges, each vertical leg member divided into three equal parts and joined together by hinges at points a third and two thirds of the length of each leg member, the improvement comprising said hinges that lock said leg members in the vertical position until downward pressure is applied to unlock the hinges and move the top third and bottom third portions of said leg members outward and away from the center to 45-degree angles from the vertical where said hinges again lock in place while the middle third portion of said leg members remain in the upright vertical orientation.

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